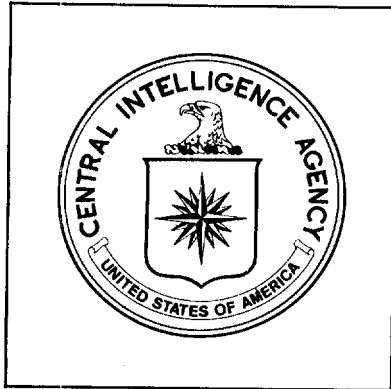


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Western Europe-Canada- International Organizations

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WESTERN EUROPE – CANADA – INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

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Danish Sailors Defy Captain

The crew of a Danish naval vessel refused to obey orders following a labor dispute last month. The ship, a fisheries protection vessel, was at sea near the Faeroes when the work stoppage occurred, but was safely docked by the captain and the ship's officers.

This act, in effect mutiny, reflects the growing strength of unionism in the Scandinavian military. Such "labor disputes" have become more frequent and military discipline largely a thing of the past.

Danish work regulations require that a crew have two days off after working seven eight-hour days. The crew interpreted the rules to include any day they were subject to three hours on-call duty as a full working day. The captain disagreed, claiming as a full day only those days when the crew actually worked.

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Renewed Farmer Demonstrations May Affect French
Cantonal Elections

Violent demonstrations by French dairy farmers and winegrowers in southern and eastern France have already caused three deaths and may give the left a boost in the cantonal elections on March 7 and 14.

Finance Minister Fourcade condemned the rioters as "irresponsible and stupid" and said that the government would not listen to the farmers while the violence continued. If the government refuses to make any concessions to the farmers, they may demonstrate their anger by abstaining from the cantonal voting or by casting their ballots for the opposition. Opinion polls conducted during the past year have shown that the majority of French farmers believe that the Communists and Socialists are more sensitive to their problems than the governing parties.

In yesterday's confrontation over wine, a high-ranking police officer and a winegrower were killed in an exchange of rifle and submachine gun fire in the city of Narbonne and several others were injured. The clash marked the first in which the southern French winegrowers have resorted to using firearms. The clash could hardly have come as a surprise to the government because the winegrowers for the past month have warned that violent demonstrations would erupt unless the government or the EC limited the amount of Italian wine sold in France or resolved the exchange disparity which makes Italian wines more attractive to French consumers.

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The president of one winegrowers' association warned several weeks ago that "militants" were being trained in the use of firearms in the event of a "serious confrontation."

Recent discussions in EC forums have indicated that there is some hope of resolving the wine problem with Italy, but that of the dairymen is more serious. French milk producers have been protesting EC price proposals which they claim are unfavorable to French farmers.

In recent weeks there have been massive farmer demonstrations in four major cities of the Lyon district and in the Vosges Mountain region of eastern France. Over 100,000 farmers participated in protests in the Lyon area, and in Dijon these demonstrations were so violent that police had to use tear gas and night sticks to hold back stone-throwing crowds.

The president of one farm syndicate said that it is not only the EC, but the French government which is responsible for the unfair prices. There is a widespread belief in the Community that France may in fact resort to national subsidies--against EC rules--if Community price decisions are deemed inadequate.

Whatever the results in Brussels--where EC farm ministers met this week--the French demonstrations are expected to continue and they may prove especially embarrassing to Prime Minister Chirac, who often championed the French farmers' cause in the EC when he was Agriculture Minister. The farmers now claim he is no longer responsive to their demands, and they may express their discontent in the cantonal elections. This could result in Chirac losing his position as president of the council-general of the department of Correze in South Central France. A two-seat shift would give the presidency of the department council to the left.

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Greek Communist Parties Take Differing Positions

The sharp differences within the traditional Communist left in Greece, especially between the Moscow-backed party and its two independent and more liberal-minded rivals, were underscored recently as each party expressed its position on various issues.

Addressing a gathering in Moscow last week during the 25th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Communist Party of the Exterior leader Harilaos Florakis confirmed by his remarks that his party remains staunchly loyal to the Soviet Union and to the Marxist-Leninist principles on party organization and strategy. Florakis, whose party is the best organized among Greece's three Communist parties, thanks to substantial Soviet financial backing, heaped praise on the Soviet Union and Soviet Communist Party leader Brezhnev.

Not surprisingly, Florakis took the Soviet line on two major issues that emerged at the Congress. He extolled "proletarian internationalism"--a euphemism for Soviet hegemony over the international communist movement--and reaffirmed his party's commitment to the principle of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" thereby rejecting political pluralism.

By contrast, the smaller and financially troubled Communist Party of the Interior, which broke away from the "exterior" party in 1968 partly over the issue of Soviet control, was not invited to the Moscow meeting. A party spokesman in Athens, however, took Brezhnev to task for his remarks at the Congress and called on Soviet leaders to be more responsive on the issues that concern West European communists such as the violation of "democratic liberties" in the USSR.

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Earlier, in a wide-ranging interview, party leader Leonidas Kyrkos reaffirmed his party's commitment to independence and political pluralism. Already in favor of Greece's entry into the European Community, Kyrkos went one step further and said publicly for the first time that for the near future at least, it is not in Greece's interest to withdraw completely from NATO.

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The United Democratic left, formerly a legal front for the once unified Communist Party of Greece, is the farthest advanced of the three in its commitment to independence and democracy. The party's ruling "administrative committee" recently took note of the liberalizing trends in West European communism and pointed to corresponding positions in the party's own program. Addressing the question of unification, party leader Ilias Iliou has noted that there are no substantial differences in program between his party and the "interior" party but ruled out rapprochement with the "exterior" party until that group undergoes a process of liberalization. Such change seems unlikely as long as the "exterior" party remains dependent on Moscow for financial support and in the long term the "exterior" Communists may find themselves increasingly isolated--particularly if the other two parties can agree on a merger.

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NATO and the Iberian Peninsula

The Western allies are proceeding with plans to draw Portugal and Spain closer to NATO. For Portugal--already an Alliance member--the task is primarily one of finding an appropriate role for the armed forces. In the case of Spain, a number of NATO members believe that it would be desirable to encourage Madrid's unofficial participation in Alliance activities until such time as West European opinion is prepared to consider formal membership for Spain.

Portugal

The effort to develop an Alliance role for the Portuguese armed forces--particularly the army--parallels Lisbon's efforts to reduce the army's political role and limit its mission to the defense of Portugal and its island possessions. Portuguese military leaders see this revised role for the army as a necessary first step toward the development of a democratic political system. Moreover, they contend the armed forces must adapt to a new role now that Portugal has relinquished its colonial empire.

The allies want to help clarify the Portuguese army's mission and modernize the armed forces in order to strengthen Lisbon's ties to NATO and reinforce moderate elements in the government. The first step in this process will be to gain formal allied approval in NATO of a force development program for Portugal. A lack of resources and planning experience in Portugal, however, make more direct Allied assistance essential.

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A British representative has, accordingly, suggested the creation of an ad hoc NATO group to exchange information on military needs, float ideas and consider alternative Portuguese force development programs. In an attempt to expand Allied bilateral military assistance, Bonn has taken steps to broaden its training support for the Portuguese air force. The US also has doubled its military assistance program for Portugal. These initiatives, if supported by the other allies, could lead to multilateral assistance under the supervision of an ad hoc NATO steering group. Such a group would have the dual task of harmonizing the various bilateral arrangements and making them consistent with NATO initiatives.

Spain

Despite Spain's position outside the North Atlantic Alliance, Western military planners believe it has an important role to play in bolstering the defense of the southern flank and the western Mediterranean. From Madrid's perspective, closer association with the Alliance is desirable because it provides an opportunity to strengthen ties with other European countries. Spain's ultimate goal is EC membership, which it believes would strengthen domestic forces committed to a democratic political system.

The recently revised US-Spanish defense treaty, which put relations on a new basis of greater reciprocity, is regarded as the initial step toward establishing closer relations with NATO. The treaty anticipates enhanced coordination with NATO and looks toward increased Spanish contacts with other Western governments.

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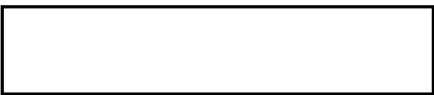
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